C O N S T I T U T I O N

(Fundamental Law)

of the

ESTONIAN

SOVIET SOCIALIST

REPUBLIC

of August 25, 1940

As amended to November 1947

Chapter I. The Social Structure

042 Art. 1. The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The political foundation of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, firmly established as a result of the overthrow of the power of the capitalists and big landowners and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Art. 3. All power in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

471 Art. 4. The economic foundation of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the instruments and means of production, firmly established as the result of the liquidation of the capitalist system of economy, the abolition of private ownership of the instruments and means of production in large industrial enterprises and the nationalisation of such enterprises with a view to the complete abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the construction of a socialist system of society.

Art. 5. Socialist property in the Estonian SSR exists either in the form of state property (belonging to the whole people) or in the form of co-operative property.

475 Art. 6. The land, its mineral wealth, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, 421 large state-organized agricultural enterprises (state farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of the dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are state property, that is, belong to the whole people.

474 Art. 7. The common enterprises of co-operative organizations, with their livestock and implements, the products of co-operative organizations, 421 as well as their common buildings, constitute the common, socialist property of the co-operative organizations.

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1 [Errata: insert "banks, transport and means of communication." Cf. Errata sheet, Cat. 116, p. 116--Analyst]

[Estonian Constitution as of November, 1947]

472 Art. 8. Alongside the socialist system of economy in the Estonian SSR the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants, artisans and handicraftsmen and small private industrial and trading enterprises.

423 Art. 9. The land occupied by peasant holdings as provided by law is secured for their use free of charge and for an unlimited time.

421 Art. 10. The personal property right of citizens in their incomes and savings from work, in their dwelling houses and subsidiary home enterprises, in articles of domestic economy and use and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of citizens to inherit personal property, is protected by law.

471 185 Art. 11. The economic life of the Estonian SSR is determined and directed by the state national-economic plan, with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily raising the material and cultural standards of the working people, of consolidating the independence of the USSR and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. Work in the Estonian SSR is a duty and a matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Estonian SSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

642 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Estonian SSR voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghis Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Estonian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Art. 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date)-1950 RG4 Estonia RG4

[Estonian Constitution as of November, 1947]

641 Art. 97. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Estonian SSR are guaranteed by law:

a) freedom of speech;
b) freedom of press;
c) freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
d) freedom of street processions and demonstrations;

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

[575] Art. 98. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Estonian SSR are guaranteed the right to unite in public organizations: trade unions, cooperative societies, youth organizations, sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically-conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 99. Citizens of the Estonian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 100. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 101. The Estonian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for scientific activities, or for struggling for national liberation.

Art. 102. It is the duty of every citizen of the Estonian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[685] Art. 103. It is the duty of every citizen of the Estonian SSR to
● [421] safeguard and fortify public, socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public, socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 104. Universal military service is law.
Military service in the Red Army is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Estonian SSR.

[687] Art. 105. To defend the country is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Estonian SSR. Treason to the motherland - violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage - is punishable with all the severity of the law as the most heinous of crimes.